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HOMEMAKERS' CHAT

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U. S. DEPARTMENT
OF AGRICULTURE
OFFICE OF INFORMATION

(Release on receipt)

SUBJECT: "Frozen Pie"--Information from the Office of Experiment Stations,
U. S. Department of Agriculture

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Back in Colonial days...it was a custom of the housewife to spend a day or so --when the weather got cold---baking the winter's supply of pies. Then she put them in the back pantry to freeze. And the job for the season was done. From then on... no matter how busy she was with the spinning and knitting or caring for the sick... the family could count on having dessert all ready to eat when thawed.

Now that many households are equipped with home freezers...we've revived this practice of storing cooked foods by freezing them. Perhaps not on such a large scale as a winter's supply of pies....but when you have the makings of more pies than your family will eat at the time...you may wish to put a few in the freezer. Today's homemaker stores a variety of foods this way. And she finds that it saves time, energy, and fuel too.

Scientists of the Georgia Agricultural Experiment Station---working in cooperation with home economists of the Tennessee Valley Authority--have made a study of freezing cooked foods.

Their purpose was to find out just which cooked foods---fruits, vegetables, meats, bakery products, and combination dishes---are suitable for freezing. They also wanted to find the best methods for preparing the food....the most desirable type of container to use...and the most satisfactory way to serve the frozen cooked foods.

The scientists found they could keep a variety of bakery products in freezing storage successfully for several months...if the products were packaged so that the food wouldn't dry out.

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However...they found that frozen pies----whether they're cooked or uncooked---do gradually dry out. And loss of flavor goes along with this evaporation. So it would seem advisable not to store pies for long periods of time.

The drying out apparently doesn't harm the consistency of the pastry but the filling may shrink and change color...particularly in the case of custard pies.

The pies dry out and become crisp when frozen. But they take up moisture very rapidly when thawed. The Southern scientists say you can save the crispness if you'll leave the pie in the package while it's thawing. They say it's best to keep the thawed pie wrapped air tight until the very minute you're ready to serve it.

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